

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER L.)

SUBJECT: CODEL WOLFF: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ODUBER AND
FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO

H TO PASS TO CODEL

REF: STATE 002686

1

ON JANUARY 12, 1976, CODEL MET JOINTLY WITH
PRESIDENT DANIEL ODUBER AND FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALO FACIO.
AMBASSADOR AND DCM ALSO PARTICIPATED. MEETING COVERED
INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING PROBLEM.

2. PRESIDENT BEGAN WITH DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL LEFT
WING GROUPS WHICH, HAVING LOST ELECTORAL STRENGTH,
ARE VYING FOR LEADERSHIP OF SOCIAL PROTEST MOVEMENT, AND SOME
OF WHICH HAD A HAND IN PROVOKING DISTURBANCES DURING RECENT PROTEST
OVER BUS FARES. HE IDENTIFIED THEM AS THE TRADITIONAL
COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH FOLLOWS MOSCOW AND IS RELATIVELY MODERATE
BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT GOVERNMENT MIGHT THROW OUT SOVIET
EMBASSY IF THEY GO TOO FAR; THE SOCIALISTS, WHICH ARE ANTI-
MOSCOW BUT PRO-CUBA AND MAY BE COMPARED WITH THE MIR IN CHILE;
AND THE FRENTE POPULAR. ALL OF THESE GROUPS HE SAID ARE
FIDELISTA IN ORIENTATION AND NOT CHINESE ORIENTED. A FOURTH
GROUP, THE MRP, HE DESCRIBED AS VIOLENT AND NOT REALLY
IN COMPETITION WITH THE OTHERS. ODUBER SAID HIS GOVERNMENT AND
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PARTY ARE DEDICATED TO STEALING THE SOCIAL ISSUE AWAY FROM ALL

THSE COMMUNIST FACTIONS.

3. THE PRESIDENT THEN FORCEFULLY CRITICIZED RECENT GRANTS BY THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION IN THE AGRARIAN FIELD, ESPECIALLY ONE TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL PLANNING AND PROMOTION AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY. ANOTHER GRANT IN THIS FIELD WENT TO THE LEFTIST NEWSPAPER PUEBLO FOR AN AGRARIAN SUPPLEMENT. THE PRESIDENT SAID THE FOUNDATION'S MOTIVES WERE GOOD BUT IT WAS BACKING THE WRONG ELEMENTS, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS COMMUNISTS. THE LATTER, HE CONTINUED, ARE DIRECTLY COMPETING WITH THE AGRARIAN REFORM EFFORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH ARE DIRECTED TOWARD PRESERVING "RURAL DEMOCRACY" IN COSTA RICA.

4. PRESIDENT ODUBER ALSO SPOKE OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO STEM THE FLOW OF RURAL MIGRATION TO THE CITIES BY HELPING THE RURAL AREAS IN HOUSING, NUTRITION, JOBS, SERVICEEPN ETC. HE SAID THAT THE PLN HAS ENCOURAGED AND HELPED THE MIDDLE CLASS OVER THE YEARS BUT NOW THE MIDDLE CLASS IS RESISTING A REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES (THROUGH HIGHER TAXES) TO HELP THE POOR. HE PRAISED SWEDEN AND SWITZERLAND AS MODELS OF COUNTRIES WITH RESPONSIBLE MIDDLE CLASSES WHICH ACCEPT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE LOWER CLASSES. COMMUNIST STATES, HE SAID, OFFER NO MODEL IN THIS RESPECT.

5. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR COSTA RICA'S CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE AND LEADERSHIP IN THE UNCJED NATIONS. CONGRESSMAN GILMAN PRAISED FONMIN FACIO'S SUPPORT FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN'S CRITICISMS IN THE UN. PRESIDENT ODUBER RESPONDED THAT A STRONG UN AND OAS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE SECURITY OF COSTA RICA.

6. PRESIDENT STATED THAT COSTA RICA FEELS EMOTIONALLY CLOSE TO U.S. FOR HISTORICAL REASONS AND LOOKS TO U.S. FOR LEADERSHIP. HE EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT PROBLEMS WITH BANANA COMPANIES HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT AND SAID THAT NEW INVESTMENTS ARE WELCOME IN NEW AREAS OF PRODUCTION, ESPECIALLY AGRO-INDUSTRY. HE ADDED THAT RETIREES ALSO ARE WELCOME FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THEY CAN MAKE TO CONSTA RICA.

7. PRESIDENT SAID THAT INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM OF U.S. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS SOMETIMES WARRANTED BUT OFTEN IS NOT. HE PROMISED THAT COSTA RICA WILL CONTINUE TO ACT AS A FRIEND OF U.S. IN INTER-NATIONAL FORA AND WILL TRY TO TEMPER MORE EXTREME REACTIONS OF SOME LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

8. THE PRESIDENT COMMENTED THAT BOTH THE PRC AND NORTH KOREA WANT TO HAVE REPRESENTATION IN COSTA RICA BUT THAT GOCR IS HAPPY WITH TAIWAN AND SOUTH KOREAN RELATIONS. HE AND FACIO

DESCRIBED PAST HEAVY-HANDED ATTEMPTS BY VISITING NORTH KOREAN GROUPS FIRST TO GAIN ENTRY AND THEN TO OVERSTAY THEIR WELCOME HERE.

9. CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND GILMAN RAISED THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING PROBLEM, EXPLAINING ITS SERIOUS IMPACT IN U.S. AND OUR NEED FOR COOPERATION OF OUR FRIENDS. PRESIDENT ODUBER RESPONDED THAT COSTA RICA IS ALSO AFFECTED, AND THAT HELPING U.S. ON THIS PROBLEM IS "ALSO HELPING OURSELVES." HE SAID THAT GOCR WANTS TO COOPERATE, AND WILL WELCOME EVERYTHING THE U.S. CAN DO HERE TO MEET THIS THREAT. HE ALSO PROMISED EARLY ACTION TO DEPORT CERTAIN NARCOTICS FUGITIVES WHOM HE HAD EARLIER DISCUSSED WITH AMBASSADOR.

10. DESCRIBING THE NEW U.S.- MEXICAN AGREEMENT TO CRACK DOWN ON NARCOTICS IN MEXICO, CONGRESSMAN WOLFF POINTED OUT DANGER THAT TRAFFICKERS MIGHT ATTEMPT TO GROW POPPIES IN HIGH, ISOLATED AREAS OF COSTA RICA. HE ALSO NOTED PROBLEM POSED BY MANY SMALL, UNCONTROLLED AIRPORTS IN COUNTRY. PRESIDENT RESPONDED THAT GOCR WISHES TO COOPERATE WITH USG TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS. TODMAN

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